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NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IRAQ; HARARE

11. The standoff with Iraq remains fodder for opinion articles being carried in the mainstream newspapers. Excerpts follow:
12. Under headline "Imminent war against Iraq: The ironies and contradictions" the pro-government weekly "The Sunday Mirror" (03/09) dedicated its ghost column "The Scrutator" to warning that "the conflict over Iraq will spill over the entire Middle East and constitute a conflagration so frightening as to distort the current balance of forces in the world, with both unforeseen and immeasurable consequences for humanity." Excerpts:

"The ironies and contradictions attendant to the current campaign for war against Iraq are becoming increasingly compelling. Even before the U. S. and Britain declare formal hostilities against Iraq, the leaders of the two countries are finding it difficult to deal with a public opinion, at home and abroad, which is blowing holes in the argument that Iraq is a threat to peace. Therefore, one of the glaring ironies is that the U. S. A. and Britain are now being projected as the real war-mongers, determined to defy public opinion that has grown so loud in its anti-war campaign throughout the western world and beyond, and ignoring the obvious devastation that war will bring to both the people of Iraq and the Middle East as a whole. Accordingly, gaining currency is the conclusion that the underlying motivation for war against Iraq on the part of the U. S. A. and Britain is oil and Israel. . .In the final analysis, the Iraq question will see many other political casualties in the western hemisphere, including the leadership in such countries as Spain and Italy. It will provoke and exacerbate internal conflicts in a number of countries in the Islamic world; not least those viewed to be close to the U. S. A., namely, Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. As I have already stated, the conflict over Iraq will spill over the entire Middle East and constitute a conflagration so frightening as to distort the current balance of forces in the world, with both unforeseen and immeasurable consequences for humanity. Quite characteristic of imperialism per se, there is the usual overestimation of one's power and a corresponding underestimation of unforeseen consequences. Bush's U. S. A. may have bitten more than it can chew."

13. Under headline "U. S. unilateralism cause of terrorism" the government-controlled weekly "The Sunday Mail" (03/09) carried an opinion piece by Tafataona Mahoso under his weekly column "African Focus," in which he accused the United States and Britain for "white-mailing the world by claiming that their threatened unilateral and illegal war on Iraq is the best way to fight terrorism." Excerpts:

". . .The global dominance of the media of the North Atlantic states, combined with the African preoccupation with Western ties, made Africans forget that Russia had suffered horrific acts to terrorism long before the September 11 attack on New York, Washington and Pentagon. In fact, the people and movement accused of perpetrating the September 11 attacks in the U. S. had been groomed as an anti-communist force against Russia and the former Soviet Union by the very same United States which on September 11, 2001 allegedly fell victim to its own supposed 'freedom fighters' against communism. . .From the point of view of the Russian Federation . . .unilateralism is, in fact, one of the biggest causes of international terrorism. . .The worst example of this tendency is the U. S.-U. K. position on Iraq. These two countries are white-mailing the world by claiming that their threatened unilateral and illegal war on Iraq is the best way to fight terrorism. They are also claiming that they have proof that Al-Qaeda has relations with Iraq. This

claim is a lie and it has the effect of actually taking the rest of the world away from dealing with real terrorism and its causes. . .The horrors of September 11 did succeed in shifting the Western view and appreciation of terrorism, but any gains made since then in seeking a collective global position on the problem were going to be destroyed if the U. S. and UK succeeded in using the cover of combating terrorism to justify a genocidal war against Iraq. . . ."

14. Under headline "U. S. not providing enough resources to schools" the government-controlled daily "The Herald" (03/10) carried the following op-ed by Bob Herbert in which he attacked the United States of wanting "to spend hundreds of billions of dollars on the war against Iraq" at the expense of the provision of adequate resources for children in public schools in the United States. Excerpts:

"Here's something surreal about the fact that the United States of America - the richest, most powerful nation in history - can't provide a basic public school education for all its children. Actually, that's wrong. Strike the word 'can't.' The correct word is more damning, more reflective of the motives of the people in power. The correct word is 'won't.' Without giving the costs much thought, we'll spend hundreds of billions of dollars on an oil-powered misadventure in the Middle East. But we won't scrape together the money for sufficient textbooks and teachers, or even, in some cases, to keep the doors open at public schools in struggling districts from Boston on the East Coast to Portland on the West. . .It's everyone's obligation to educate the next generation of Americans. It's an insane society that can contemplate devastating and then rebuilding Iraq, but can't bring itself to provide schooling for all of its young people here at home."

SULLIVAN